

Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P)

WHAT ARE MUAs/MUPs?

Locations or population groups that meet criteria to qualify for a federal designation that makes them eligible for a variety of federal program resources and benefits.

WHICH LOCATIONS OR POPULATION GROUPS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR DESIGNATION?

- A distinct geographic area such as a county; or
- A specific population group such as low-income individuals.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY DESIGNATION CRITERIA?

- Proposed service area must be rational. Rational Service Areas (RSA) may be whole county, established neighborhoods, populations with similar socio-economic characteristics, or an area with physical access barriers to healthcare services.
- Primary care physician to population ratio.
- Travel time to reach provider.
- Indicators of high need such as infant mortality rate, poverty population, 65 and over population.

For more information on designation criteria: <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/muaguide.htm>

WHAT TYPES OF HEALTH PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINES MAY QUALIFY FOR A SHORTAGE DESIGNATION?

- MUAs/MUPs are only relevant for primary care physicians.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROGRAMS FOR WHICH AN MUA/P MAY BE ELIGIBLE?

- J-1 Visa Waiver Program
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)

The Maryland Primary Care Organization (PCO) facilitates the federal MUA/P designation process. Designations are awarded at the federal level by the Shortage Designation Branch of the Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr). For more information, visit:

http://www.fha.state.md.us/ohpp/pco/html/state_hpsas.cfm#mua

Fact Sheet prepared by the Office of Health Policy and Planning, located in the Family Health Administration, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Martin O'Malley, Governor - Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor - John M. Colmers, Secretary

Family Health Administration

Russell W. Moy, M.D., M.P.H., Director, FHA - Joan Salim, Deputy Director, FHA

